

203
- A Brief
ANSVVER

To a Small Book written by

John Norcot

AGAINST

Infant-Baptisme

This *Answer* is written by *John Eliot* for the sake of some of the Flock of Jesus Christ who are ready to be staggered in point of *Infant-Baptisme* by reading his Book.

Boston printed by *John Foster*. 1679.

A brief Answer to a small Book written
by *John Norcot*, against Infant Baptism.

This Answer is written by *John Eliot* for
the sake of some of the flock of Jesus
Christ, who were ready to be stag-
gered in the point of Infant Bap-
tism, by reading that Book.

THe Book speaketh with the voice of a
Lamb, and I think the Author is a godly
though erring Brother; but he acteth the
cause of the roaring Lyon, who by all
crafty wayes seeketh to devour the poor
Lambs of the flock of Christ. The chief
hinge that the whole discourse hangeth upon is, that
there is no place of Scripture for baptizing Infants.

I will therefore begin there, to stop the gain-saying
mouth of this Book.

The baptizing of Believers and their Infants
was one of the first Gospel Apostolical Institutions com-
manded in the Gospel politie, *Acts 2.37,38,39.* when
those heart pricked penitent Jews solemnly asked touch-
ing the great change of Church Polity that was now in
motion, *what shall we do?* or how shall we engage our
selves into this new Polity? this is one part of their
question, as it appeareth by the Answer. The Apostle
answereth them, *ver. 38,39.* the substance and sense of
which words in respect of our question is thus formed.

Every one of you to whom the promise belongeth, we
do order and appoint you to be baptized.

But the promise belongeth to all you penitent belie-
vers and to your Children. A 3 Therefore

Therefore we order and appoint all you penitent Believers and your Children to be baptized, consider the words.

Some Gentile Believers, or the Apostle himself on their behalf, further promoteth the same question, touching them that were afar off, *viz.* in respect of Church state, and Interest in the promise. What shall they do that have no Interest in the promise? being afar off, in respect of the Covenant, and afar off in place also, as the Gentile Nations were.

The Apostle answereth, that we order the same Law and Institution to all, *viz.* *whom the Lord our God shall call*; when the Lord our God shall call any of the Gentiles to be penitent Believers, as now you Jews be, then the promise doth belong unto them, and unto their Infants; and we do order, that they and their Infants shall be baptized, and marked for the Lambs of Christ, that do belong to his Fold.

Behold here a clear Gospel Institution of baptizing Believers and their Infants, in all the Gospel Churches, be they Jews or Gentiles. All endeavours of an Answer to this Text do only mud the waters to hinder a clear sight of the Truth that shineth in the words.

As we see a clear precept for Infant Baptism, so I shall shew a clear practice and example of it, *Act. 2. 41.* *then they that gladly received his Word were baptized, viz.* they and their Children were baptized. For I ask, did they receive the whole Word of Apostolical Institution? or only a part of the Word? sure you will say, they received the whole Word of Institution, therefore these Believers and their Children at first or at last were baptized. Had the believing parents only been baptized, and left out their Children, then they had received but part of the Word of Institution. So then, here we behold a famous example, according to which all the Gospel Churches have walked ever since unto this day, and that

that without interruption, saving that sometime some small interruption hath been made by the Anabaptists that deny or have questioned Infant Baptisme.

Baptisme is the seal of the Covenant, whomsoever therefore God doth receive into Covenant with him, they have a fundamental right in due order to receive the Seal, the Seal is so annexed to the Covenant, that it is called the Covenant, *Gen. 17. 13.* now God doth receive the Children of Believers into Covenant, *Acts 2. 38, 39.* *the promise doth belong to you and to your Children,* and therefore the Seal doth belong unto them,

Math. 3. 15. *So it becometh us to fulfil all Righteousness,* saith Christ, who are meant by [*us*] of whom Christ speaketh? *Answ.* He speaketh firstly of himself, and *John*, then of all his Church and members thereof. Therefore as it was meet and righteous for Christ the Head to fulfil that Law and Institution of God in being baptized; so it is meet that every member of the Church of Christ should in due order do the same, it is righteous that it should be so. Now Infants of Believers are members of the Church of Christ, the Covenant comprehends them, the promise belongeth unto them, and therefore they ought in due order to be baptized.

Mark. 10. 14. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, *suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdome of God,* Christ saith that the Kingdome of God both Militant & Triumphant doth consist of many such members, how come they into the Church?

Answ. God doth admit them by his Institution into his Covenant, *Ge. 17. 7.* *a God unto thee and to thy Seed after thee* and the Church doth solemnly receive them by Baptism.

Quest. *How can the Church receive them, when they do not know them to be fit matter for the Church?*

Answ. The Church may lawfully admit unto Communion in all the Ordinances upon sufficient Testimony,

as *Acts 9. 26, 27, 28.* The Primitive Church admitted *Saul* upon the Testimony of *Barnabas*. Now for the admitting of Infants we have the best and greatest Testimony in the World, that they are fit matter for the Church, and that they are duly and acceptibly qualified: for we have the Testimony of God, the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. I have more boldness of Faith in receiving Infants into the Communion of the Church, then up-grown persons, whom we have most accurately tryed, because our Infants are received upon divine Testimony, others though we admit them according to divine Institution, yet upon more inferior Testimony.

Rom. 11. 16. *If the first fruits be holy, the lump is also holy, if the Root be holy, so are the branches also.* A Believer and his Children are but one lump, in his Church station, the believing Parents sanctifie the whole household, who are under the Parents tuition, a Believer and his Children are but one Tree in the Church or Vineyard of the Lord, and when the Root is holy, the whole Tree, all the branches are holy; this is the Ecclesiastical state of all believers. Hence therefore we ought to receive all the Infants of believers unto Communion in the Church, according to their Capacities. Now Infants are capable of Communion with the Church in Baptisme: which doth most evidently appear in the Church of the Jews, where they were capable of Circumcision, and were ever admitted into the Communion of the Church therein, and the Apostles were wont to baptize all the Household, when the Parents believed. The Lord doth account them visible Believers that are branches of a believing Root, and giveth that Testimony of them. And God who appointed it, best knoweth what is acceptable to himself. The present administration of Baptisme to Infants is a present exercise of Faith, love and duty in all the Church, and especially in the Parents, and
it

it is an after exercise of Faith, love, and duty in the Child, when he is grown up to years of capacity, and as long as he liveth his Baptisinal Covenant christianly improved upon him, doth very powerfully by the assistance of the Spirit oblige him to walk as becometh a child of the Lord, and prepareth him for confirmation, in laying hold on the Covenant of God by his own choice, consent, and act. There is a passive reception of Christ and his Kingdome, which Infants are capable of: in which act of grace adult up grown persons must humble themselves to become like Infants, *Mark. 10. 13. whosoever shall not receive the Kingdome of God as a little child shall not enter thereinto.* If then God knoweth how to have, and exercise such spiritual Communion with Infants, who are we that we should keep them from him when he calleth for them? and hath instituted an Ordinance for that use and end, *Mark. 10. 14. I return to this Text where Christ saith, suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdome of God.* The instituted ordinary way of little childrens coming to Christ is by Baptisme, there coming at this time, instanced in this Text was for his blessing, that was their end at that time, but on that occasion Christ treateth upon the doctrine of Infants coming to Christ, and Christ commandeth that it should be so, and hath instituted an ordinary means whereby they may come unto him, and that is by Baptisme, as in the old Church they did by Circumcision. This command of Christ, for Childrens coming to him is of force to this day, and will be to the worlds end, and therefore it doth not intend only a personal coming to the bodily presence of Christ, as at that time, but Christ intends the visible, external instituted way of Infants coming to Christ, this we are commanded to suffer, the Elders and the Church are commanded by Christ to suffer Infants to come to him, the means of their coming to Christ is by Baptisme
Christ

Christ is so serious and earnest in this matter, as that he expresseth this precept both affirmatively [*suffer them*] and negatively, *forbid them not*. This word speaketh directly and home unto the opposers of Infant Baptisme, Christ hath forbidden you to be an hindrance to them, by word, speech, writing, power, or any other way, *forbid them not*.

And the Lord is so full in the stream of this Command to suffer them, and of his forbidding us, to forbid or hinder them, that he doth urge it with a great Reason, *viz. of such is the Kingdome of God*; the militant Church consisteth of many such members, half our Churches are Infants, and what? will you not suffer Christ to have Communion with them, nor them to have Communion with Christ by the Ordinance which Christ hath appointed for it? the Kingdome of Heaven hath many Infants in it, and shall Christ have Communion with them in Heaven, and will you not suffer him to have Communion with them on Earth in the visible Church when he requireth it?

Yea, this point is several times instanced and repeated in the Gospel, to shew, how much the heart of Christ is upon this point. Yea, this Text saith that Christ was very much displeased with his Disciples upon this occasion, it is very seldome that Christ expressed himself displeased with them (about twice) and this was one of the times, and the occasion of it.

Joh 21.15. Christ hath appointed it as one great part of our Ministerial charge to feed the little Lambs, so the word signifieth, the Infants being part of them, how can we feed Infants? surely by administering Baptisme unto them, for Infants are capable of this instituted way of feeding, this Text is a strong evidence, Christ hath made the little Lambs the Subjects of Ecclesiastical Ministerial feeding, therefore no doubt the Lord hath instituted some publick Ordinance, that they are capable to be fed
withal

withat, and that is Baptisme, Infants are secondarily fed by feeding their Parents, but they are personally fed by Baptisme, and constantly.

From the first Creation of man God hath transacted with man by a Covenant, and hath alwayes comprehended the Parents and children together in his Covenant, thus it was with *Adam* in innocency, the children of *Adam* were comprehended with him in the Covenant of works, as we know by woful Experience. After the fall, God brought *Adam* under the Covenant of grace in Christ, and in that Covenant he comprehended his Seed with him. When God called *Abraham*, he brought him under a Covenant, and comprehended his Seed with him, *I am thy God, and thy Childrens God.* And that was our Gospel Covenant, touching which the Apostle saith, *the promise belongeth to you and to your Children*, and thus it is with all the Gospel Churches, both Jews and Gentiles, even with all Believers, *whom the Lord our God shall call.* And it is the Infinite mercy of God to bind himself to us by Covenant, both to strengthen our weak Faith, and that his Covenant mercy might bind and stay the revenging hand of Justice from destroying us for our iniquities. God remembreth his Covenant and therefore spareth us and our children, as we may see, *Psal.* 105. 8, 9, 10. and *ver.* 40, 41, 42. and *Psal.* 106. 43, 44, 45. and *Psal.* 89. 30, 31, 32, 33, 34. be thankful therefore to God for his Covenant with us, and with our children, exclude them not from this great mercy.

1 Cor. 7. 14. It seemeth some in *Corinth* doubted whether the children of such Parents were in Covenant with God, and to be received by the Church, when only one of the Parents was a believer, the other wicked, a Pagan, and it is like it was a frequent case, sometimes the husband was converted and not the wife, sometimes the wife converted, and not the husband: and this case might well come into question, by reason of that ancient fa-

mons practice of *Ezra*, and the Jewish Church,

To the question the Apostle answereth, that if either of the Parents be a believer, their children are accepted by God into the Gospel Covenant, and the Church ought to receive them, because in such a case the unbelieving husband or wife is sanctified by God unto the believing, to bring forth an holy Seed. If they were not so, then all such children of a believing Parent should be unholy, but saith the Apostle, that is not so, for all the children of a believer are holy, though their yoke-fellow were unholy. God received such children into his Gospel Covenant, with the believing Parent and all the Churches did receive such children, and now the question is stated and settled by divine Authority, *viz.* that all such children that had but one Parent a believer, were received by the Church as an holy Seed.

One Rule of judging of the soundness of a Doctrine is by its tendency to holiness, charity, and unity among the Saints. The opinion of the Anabaptists hath not such a tendency, it is a most uncharitable opinion, and therefore contrary to the Spirit of the Gospel of Christ, love and charity is a peculiar character of a disciple of Christ, *Joh. 13.35. by this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples,* censoriousness of others, especially when better then themselves is exceeding contrary to the Spirit of the Gospel, and such doth their opinion expose them to be, what their inward state is, I do not meddle with it, but if they follow their opinion, as this book of *John Norcot* doth thoroughly, it leadeth them to the highest excess of censorious uncharitableness, (to say no worse,) and that against men much better then themselves.

Though there be so clear an Instance of circumcision of Infants, and Christ himself was circumcised when he was an Infant, *Luk. 2.21.* though there be so clear an institution of Baptisme to seal the Covenant, as circumcision did unto believers and their Seed, and though there be

be so clear a Testimony that the primitive Church did so practice, and all the Gospel Churches ever since have so walked : yet because they do not see these things to be so, they do think that the primitive Church had not so much light as to practice so, and whereas all the Gospel Churches in the world have ever since so practised, they judge they have walked in sin, and their Baptisme is null, all the world are unbaptized persons, saving themselves, and they now call themselves Baptists, and all the rest of the christian world baptized in their Infancy are unbaptized persons, Churches, Ministry, Sacraments, all are nullified, &c.

What an horrible degree of uncharitableness is this; to say no worse of it.

Again, because if they grant Infants of believers to be comprehended in the Covenant, they cannot deny them the Seal of Baptisme, therefore they do rather exclude (in their opinion) all the world of Infants of believers from the Covenant of God and the Church, then to grant them subjects to be baptized. They rob the Lambs of their interest in the Church, in the communion of Saints, and in the Covenant of God, which is a wicked injury done against the Lambs of Christ, who are not able to help themselves, therefore Christ will help them, and wo to those that do them this injury.

Math. 18. 5, 6, 10. Who so shall receive one such little child in my Name receiveth me, but who so shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a Mill-stone were banged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea. Christ doth account the children of believers to be believers, the Root and branches make but one Tree, ver. 10. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, (and Christ doth know it perfectly) that in Heaven there Angels do alwayes behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven.

Again, the uncharitableness of this opinion doth sadly appear

appear in this, that they teach men to be without natural affection, which is one of the gross sins of these latter & perilous times, 2Tim. 3. 3. & this they do, in one of the highest points in the world, viz. that Parents should exclude their own children from sharing with them in Christ, & from Church Interest with Christ, yea, to put them away, & say, you have no portion with me in this great matter.

Christ was displeased with his Disciples when upon occasion of much business in teaching the people, they forbad Parents to bring their children to Christ to have his blessing. What think you, he will say to the Anabaptists, who teach and cause their very Parents themselves to put away their children from Christ? not only not to bring them, but to exclude them, never since the world began was there more unnatural affection then this is. Parents alwayes endeavour to interest their children with themselves in their Religion, and in their God, as being the best thing they have in the world.

Again, it is great uncharitableness in respect of such Infants of believers, as dye in their Infancy, to judge them to dye without interest in the Covenant of God, thereby depriving both Parents and the Church of the comfort of that hope, that they dyed in Gods Covenant.

Again, it is great uncharitableness to hinder (as much as in them lyeth) the Church from opportunity of eminent exercise of Faith in communion with the Father & with the Son, for when we receive little children into communion with the Church, we have communion with Christ, and with the Father, *Math. 18. 5. who so shall receive one such little child in my Name receiveth me, Mark. 9. 36, 37. and he took a child and set in the midst of them, and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, whosoever shall receive one of such children in my Name, receiveth me, and whoso shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me, Luk. 9. 47, 48. Jesus took a child, and set him by him, and said unto them, whosoever shall receive this child in my*
Name;

Name, receiveth me, and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me. We see here is eminent communion with the Father and with the Son, in receiving Infants into our communion, and how do we receive Infants into our communion? the instituted way is, by owning them to be comprehended in the Covenant of God, with the Church, and visibly receiving them into the communion of the Church by Baptisme, if there be any other way of receiving Infants in the Name of Christ, Instance in it: this way is clear in the Scripture our receiving them in Baptism, our communion with the Lambs of Christ, in the Name of Christ which is very well pleasing to him. Never to do this, yea, to refuse to do it, is a sinful and offensive gap in our communion with Christ, to reject Infants from this communion is an offence against Christ of a provoking nature, and especially to glory in our so doing.

Psal. 127.3. children are *the heritage of the Lord*, and how come they to be so interested? it is by virtue of their parental Covenant: our Covenant Interest is our spiritual Patrimony, our Estate in Religion which our Parents convey unto us, it is an Estate of good use unto us all the dayes of our life, especially at some difficult times a Christian hath two stocks to live and spend upon.

1. His Patrimony, or Covenant Interest which his Parents left him, 2^{dly}. His acquired state in grace which he hath got and gained, by the good improvement of his Patrimony, a Christian liveth and spendeth upon both these stocks, and we need them both, and all little enough sometimes, as we shall see anon.

The Anabaptists deny this spiritual Patrimony, the Covenant Interest by Parents, and live only upon an acquired state of grace, which they have gained without improvement of their parental Covenant, if we may believe them, but they are deceived.

For our parental Interest in the Covenant, our spiritual

tual Patrimony is a great & sanctified means of conversion, though not the only means, for strangers (as our Indians) are converted by the Gospel without that means, so far as we know. But in the Churches of Christ all our converts are converted by their improvement of their Patrimony, their parental Interest in the Covenant as one means which doth plainly appear in their confessions, when they come into the full communion of the Church, and therefore in this respect they deal very uncharitably, (to say no worse of it) with their children, to deny them their Patrimony of Covenant Interest.

Prov. 13. 22. A good man leaveth an Inheritance to his Childrens Children, that is, by bringing up his children so well, that he seeth his Patrimony secured to his second Generation. So it is in our spiritual Estate, a good man will (through grace) so improve the Patrimony, the Covenant Interest which he doth convey to his children, as to bring them to take hold on the Covenant themselves, by their own act, and free consent willingly, *Deut. 29. 10, &c. Nehem. 10. 28.* and hereby is the progress of their Covenant Interest secured and conveyed over to his second Generation. Sometimes Parents are put so hard to it in pleading with God for their children, (or for some of them at least) as that they have nothing to plead on their behalf but the Covenant Interest, their Patrimony, they may be so profligate that they have nothing else to plead upon, and blessed be God, that will hold to the last, this was *Dauids* case and so he pleadeth, *2 Sam. 23. 5. although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation and all my desire although he make it not to grow.* Now the Anabaptists cut themselves and their children off from this plea, by denying them their Patrimony, Covenant Interest in God. Sometimes a Christian may be so low brought by desertion and distress of Soul, as that they may be
glad

glad to fly to their Patrimony and Covenant Interest to help their Faith. Sometimes *David* was so hard beset, that he was caused to plead and spend upon his Patrimony, *Psal. 86. 16. O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me, give thy strength unto thy servant, & save the Son of thy Handmaid.* And sometimes in his Thanksgiving, he doth acknowledge that his Covenant Interest, his parental Patrimony was one spring of his mercyes which he has received, *Psal. 116. 16. Truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, the Son of thy Handmaid, thou hast loosed my Bonds.*

Sometimes Gods Children may be sunk so low, as that they can see no acquiste grace or Interest to plead, nothing to plead or improve for themselves but their Patrimony, their Covenant Interest, *Isai. 93. 17. Why hast thou made us to erre from thy wayes, and hardened our hearts from thy fear, return for thy Servants sake the Tribes of thine Inheritance.* How ill do the Anabaptists provide for

their own comforts, when they cut off (so far as in them lyeth, if an opinion could do it,) themselves and their children from this plea and succour of Faith. God in his wisdom and mercy saw that we are weak, and have need of a Patrimony, a Covenant Interest by our Parents, and sometimes to live upon a Talent of his providing, when our own good Husbandry would fail us; and when it is so he directeth and commandeth us to improve our Covenant Interest, our Patrimony, *Isai. 51.*

2. look unto Abraham your Father, and Sarah that bare you, 1 Chron. 16. 12, 13. Remember his marvellous works that he had done, his wonders, and the Judgements of his mouth, O Seed of Israel his servant, ye Children of Jacob his chosen. but such as reject their own Patrimony, and refuse to provide one for their children, must live only upon their own Trade and gains. What are they so strong in grace as that they need not to improve that Patrimony which God hath provided for our relief? Sometimes Gods people are fallen so low that God hath no ground

shewing them mercy, but only because of their Patrimony, their Parental Covenant, 2 King. 13. 22, 23, *Hazael oppressed Israel and the Lord was gracious to them and had compassion on them; and had respect unto them, because of his Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet.* And God hath promised thus to deal with his children and people, *Psal. 89. 28, ad 35. My Covenant shall stand fast with him, if his Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgements, if they break my statutes, and keep not my Commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with the Rod, and their iniquity with stripes, nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my Faithfulness to fail, my Covenant will I not break, &c.* and what a blessed Patrimony is Gods Covenant, yet the Anabaptists cut off their Children from this blessed priviledge. Sometimes Gods people may be so apostate that they have nothing acquired left for their recovery, only their Patrimony, only the Covenant, as it is at this day in that dreadful Apostacy of *Israel and Judah*, yet we have Faith for their recovery by their Patrimony, their Interest in the Covenant of *Abraham*, for the gifts and calling of God are without Repentance, and the riches of Gods Covenant! how contrary to the Spirit and charity of the Gospel is that opinion; that cutteth off the children of the Church from this blessed Patrimony? the more I experience the charity of the Gospel, (which God knoweth is but a little) the more doth my Soul loath that uncharitable opinion of the Anabaptists.

Furthermore, this opinion is pernicious and destructive unto the Churches of Jesus Christ, it killeth the Church in the bud, it robbeth them of their Lambs, and will soon make the Churches and Kingdome of Jesus Christ thin and poor, but the world and Satans Kingdome will be full and rich, if this opinion should prevail, which God forbid! when *Laban* hired *Jacob* to serve him for wages,

ges, *Jacob* bargained for no other wages but Lambs, and though *Laban* liked it well at first, yet he soon found that *Jacob* grew rich, and he grew poor, the same issue will all the Churches find, that the excluding of the Lambs as the Anabaptists do, or the neglecting them as other Churches do, will in a few years make the Churches thin and poor, there is an hurtful bird in some countryes, that spoyleth Orchards, and maketh them barren, by feeding upon, and devouring the buds in the spring time, it is very needful to keep a diligent watch against such evil birds, least our Churches become barren Vineyards, and empty Vines.

It may be some will say, that notwithstanding all that is here said, I do not yet see that there is either precept, institution or Example of baptizing Infants. Ans. what? is it not so, because you see it not? if you be dark, blind, ignorant in so great a point as this is, are all the Churches in the world mistaken, who do see both precept, Institution, and Example for it? are your dark minds and blind eyes the standard by which every bodys light and understanding must be regulated? must all men light their candles at your dim light? what bottom doth that flag grow in? consider this, that all they that oppose Infant Baptisme, they do not bring any positive evidence against it, only a negative, and that negative is grounded in their own darkness; and ignorance it is not so, say they, because I see it not.

We agree with the Anabaptists in the general proposition which is this, nothing is to be received in Divine worship, but that which hath a Divine Institution.

We agree to it, but the particular proposition, the minor, the assumption; there we differ, which is this.

But the baptizing of believers and their Infants hath a Divine Institution, this we affirm, and prove, and therefore we conclude that believers and their Infants ought to be baptized.

They deny this proposition, and what proof bring they? nothing at all that I know off, but this, I do not see it, therefore I do not believe it, therefore I oppose it. Their chief discourses are cavillations against our proofs, whereby Satan doth effectually keep their eyes shut, so that they cannot see the Truth, but are puffed up with their own ignorance.

I shall now take a brief consideration of the Book And I will give one direction to such as read it, which being observed it will quite enervate the whole Book, viz. when the Book mentioneth baptizing of believers, do you add in your mind [and their Seed] which if you hold unto, the Book hath nothing in it, that I remember, that will hurt you in that point. Nor is this a begging of the question, because I have proved, that when Baptisme of Believers was first instituted in the Gospel Churches by the Apostles, the baptizing of their Infants was also instituted. And I have proved that God doth account the Children of believers to be believers, they may be (for ought we know) actual believers, as *John Baptist* was, and if they dye in their Infancy (as many do) we ought to believe that they are saved by the power and grace of Gods Covenant, under which they are comprehended, if they are not actual believers, and live to shew it, yet they are under Gods instituted means and Ordinances, to be trained up to become believers, and therefore all such God doth account (as to Ecclesiastical respects) to be believers, and Subjects capable to be baptized. The believing Parent the Root, and his Infants the branches, make but one Tree in Gods Vineyard, therefore those things which God hath put together, let not us put asunder. And for this Reason I give the Reader this direction, alwayes, when the baptizing of believers is mentioned, add in your mind [and their Infants]

CHAP. I.

That Jesus being about thirty years old was baptized of *John*, in *Jordan*, is true ; But Baptisme was not instituted till about that time, by *John*, had it been instituted when Jesus was an Infant, he would have submitted to it, as he did submit himself to be circumcised, when he was an Infant, *Luk. 2. 21.*

CHAP. II.

Of the great Commission for baptizing believers, I add, and their Infants.

Go teach and baptize, teaching is first, true, and Infants are taught and made Disciples, in that their Parents are so. And God doth account them believers, as their Parents are, and therefore God hath instituted, that they also as well as their Parents should be baptized.

CHAP. III.

Of Examples.

Iohn. 4. 1, 2. Jesus made Disciples and baptized, they were made Disciples, not born so.

Ans. So it was with the first believers, but their Infants had the privilege to be born Disciples. And this was at the beginning of the publick Ministry of Christ, the order of the Gospel Churches was not yet instituted and fixed, that was done at the beginning of the Apostles Ministry, *Act. 2.* And what though the *Samaritan* believers both men and women are mentioned to be baptized without mention of their Infants, that is no evidence

that it was not done either first or last, seeing it is a divine Apostolical Institution that Infants are comprehended with their Parents. The Eunuch was a stranger, and from home, his Family absent, therefore there is no force in that instance, but on the contrary rather, for he carrying home tydings of the Gospel, it was so effectually received (as Historians report) that it continueth with them unto this day, and Infant Baptisme among other parts of Gods worship. When *Paul* was baptized he had no Children, nor was he ever married that we know of, therefore his Example hath no force to oppose Infant Baptisme.

The Example of the Jaylor affordeth consideration of weight, the Head of the Family being converted, his whole Family are accounted believers, and were baptized. Such as were adult in his Family no doubt manifested their Faith; the Infants of his Family were in Gospel order to be trained up in the Faith of the Gospel, and therefore were accounted believers, and therefore all his household were baptized. The same may be said of *Lydia* and *Crispus*.

CHAP. IV.

Here the book proceedeth by digressing into another litigious point, viz. whether Baptisme is to be administred by dipping, or as we do by washing, or sprinkling. Which manner of administration, though the holy Scriptures have left it indifferent, either way may be lawful, yet this treatise fixeth a necessity upon dipping, yea such, as to nullifie that Baptisme that is not so administred.

In another place the Book blameth, at least seeketh to invalidate our doctrine of Infant Baptisme, because we take it up & teach it, only upon consequence, though it is not so, for we plead positive Institution and Example,

ple. But this point of dipping is taken up only by consequence, and that but probable consequence at the best, there is no proof that any in the times of Christ were baptized by dipping, nor that *John* nor *Phillip* baptized by dipping. Baptisme is a signe, and a little of the signe is enough to signifie great matters, a little bit of bread a little sip of wine is enough to signifie wonderful great things, *Iob. 13, 9, 10.* when Christ washed his Disciples feet, Peter said, *thou shalt never wash my feet*, but when he understood that it was for spiritual use and instruction, he would have more of the signe, *not my feet only, but my hands and my head*, but Christ saith, *it is enough that the feet only be washed, he that is so washed is clean every whit.* So it is with our brethren, they knowing that Baptisme is of great signification and use, therefore they desire a great deal of the signe, they would be dipped quite under water, over head and ears in the signe. What need that be? a little of the signe is enough to lead up Faith unto its glorious Objects in Christ. The face is the most eminent and principal part of man, if therefore the face be baptized, the whole man is baptized. If the face be a little washed, buried, sprinkled, covered with water, it is enough to signifie unto our faith all that is signified by Baptisme. Baptisme is sundry times set forth to signifie our death, burying, and rising with Jesus Christ. It is sundry times set forth by sprinkling with the blood of Christ, it is sundry times set forth by washing, once by putting on Christ, if therefore Baptisme be administered either by washing, or by sprinkling, or by dipping, our Faith must be raised unto all these significations of the Baptismal signe, & it is indifferent which of these wayes be used, either powring with the hands of the baptizer a convenient quantity of water upon the face, by way of sprinkling or washing, or by dipping the face, there is much exercise of divine knowledge and faith in that part of Gods worship in the administration of, and parti-

Cipating in the Sacrament of Baptisme more then can be expressed by the signe, though all is signified. And to give a short touch of the indifferency of the manner of its administration. It is but in two places where they went into the water to baptize. *Iohn* alwayes so did, for he preached in the Wildernes, where there was no accommodation to do otherwise, and there the River was broad, and by that means more shallow towards the bank, so that people might come to him, standing in the water, and lifting up their faces to Heaven, he taking up water in his hands sprinkling and pouring it on their faces, and so they were baptized, in which action there is death, buryal under water, resurrection, washing, covering, sprinkling, a little of the signe of those great things signified thereby, it is more probable, as I conceive, that this was the manner that *Iohn* and *Philip* used when they went into the water to baptize. *Phillip* and the Eunuch going into the water to baptize, is the second and last Example that I know off, who were travelling in the Road where they had as little accommodation to do otherwise, as *Iohn* had in the Wildernes.

But that great administration of Baptisme, *Act. 2. 41.* was performed in the Temple, where was no River, nor deep waters for dipping the whole body, but there was alwayes plenty of water in the Temple, very much was used about the sacrifices in washing and boyling, and much was drank by the people, who did eat and drink in Gods presence, though there was a little wine brought with the Sacrifice by Institution, yet at all their sacrifice Feasts the people would need water also to drink, and it was readily to be had, for there were many whose office it was to be drawers of water for the Temple Service, and who ever needed water might easily have it. And there belonged unto the Temple all sorts of Vessels needful for the Service of God, Basons, Charges, Platters, &c. Therefore in this famous business of baptizing those

those Gospel Converts, the water drawers would readily supply all the baptizers with sufficient water, in fitting Vessels, not for dipping, but for washing, sprinkling, and pouring water with their hands upon the faces of the baptized.

Acts 16.33. The same hour of the night the Jaylor was baptized, he and all his straight way, there was no going to a River for dipping. *Paul* was baptized in the room where he lay sick, *Acts 9.18,19.*

Cornelius and his Family, and Friends were baptized in the place where the Word was preached to them, and prayers were made, and the holy Ghost was poured out upon them, they were baptized with the Holy Ghost and with water Baptisme in the same place, there is nothing intimated of the Assemblies removing to some River for water Baptisme. Baptisme is a part of Gods worship, which is to be administred in the publick Assembly of the Church, and so do the generality of the Gospel Churches walk, in all places of the world, which places of Assemblies rarely be by River sides.

CHAP. V

IN this Chapter there is no difference of moment that I see, saving that it is affirmed, that *Eydia* was baptized in the River, which cannot be proved.

Chap. VI. I pass by this Chapter also.

Chap. VII. Believers (I add and their Infants) Baptisme is a great Ordinance.

CHAP. VIII.

THIS Chapter answereth Objections in *Numb. 22.* but many of them are trivial, of little concernment, and unto others of them, I have already said enough for the present, therefore I shall take up here and there one, and pass on.

Object. 5. Doth not Baptisme come in the room of Circumcision? the Book answereth, no surely, there is

no Scripture for it. *Ans.* I pray consider, *Rom. 4. 11.* he received Circumcision, the Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, which he had yet being uncircumcised, that he might be the Father of all that believe, though they be not circumcised. And *Gal. 3. 17.* this I say the Covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ, &c. viz. confirmed by Circumcision, we see that Circumcision confirmed their entrance into the Covenant of Faith, and so doth Baptisme confirm their entrance into the Gospel Covenant, *Acts 2. 38, 39.* Circumcision was one of the first Ecclesiastical Ordinances, which did engage and oblige them to keep the whole Law, *Gal. 5. 3.* So Baptisme is one of the first Ecclesiastical Ordinances which doth engage and oblige us to obey the whole Gospel, *all things whatsoever I command,* *Math. 28. 19, 20.*

Why they deny Baptisme to come in the room of Circumcision I know not, unless it be for fear of an Argument that it affordeth for Infant Baptisme, which they know not how to evade.

Object. 10. Infants were once Church members, and we do not find them cut off. *Ans.* Touching Infants interest in the Covenant I have said a little already, I shall add a word or two more to something that is here said, *Math. 3. 9, 10.* think not to say we have Abraham a Believer for your Father. *Ans.* They made a carnal confident use of their parental Covenant, as also they did, *Job. 8.* and other places, though they were of ripe years, and should have improved the Covenant by laying hold on it, unto their sanctification, yet they did not so, they lived in gross sin, and yet plead their paternal Covenant, alas it profits not in that case. It is now with us in our infancy and minority, our parental Covenant alone is of great Efficacy, but when we are up-grown, we must take hold on the Covenant our selves, and improve both our own, and our parental Covenant, for our mortification and holiness of life, and think not to say Abraham a believer.

is our Father, upon any other Terms, especially if they cloak over a vile conversation, with *Abraham* is our Father, *Abraham* will not own such Children, and further *John* sheweth them that by reason of their carnal abuse of their paternal Covenant, God was about to break them off through their unbelief, to which end, *the Axe is laid to the Root of the Tree*, &c. the Tree is the Nation of the Jews, the Root is their Ecclesiastical state, in the Covenant of *Abraham*, the Axe is the Roman, whom the Jews themselves did whet and sharpen to do thorough Execution upon them, and therefore he exhorts them to be penitent and fruitful believers.

The Book further saith, where were infants ever members of a particular Gospel Church? *Ans.* See it *Act. 2. 36, 37. 1 Cor. 7. 14.*

Objct. 16. I was baptized in my infancy, what need I be baptized again? you say it is not water thrown in the face that makes Baptisme. *Ans.* Alas, who sayeth so? nor is this any Scripture Language: if the scope of these words be to disparage the Ordinance, we may see how prone we are to drop words that need a pardon in the blood of Christ. The Parent giveth consent to the Baptismal Covenant, and acteth Faith in the behalf of the Child, and the child is trained up and taught to do it himself, and this is accepted of God. They in *Act. 19. 1, &c.* were not rebaptized, but instructed by the Apostle, that they were rightly baptized, if there be an error in the infant Subject, and in the manner, (in both which you are deceived) yet it seemeth great boldness to nullify Baptisme, and to affirm, that all the Churches and Saints from the Apostles to this day are unbaptized persons, except your inconsiderable selves. O what need have we of humility and charity!

CHAP. IX.

The designe of this Chapter is to set the baptizing of believers and of infants in opposition one against the other.

offer, when as God hath conjoynd them together, believers and their infants are to be baptixed; there is more deceit than weight in this doing, the first and the two last of these touches deny that there is any Scripture for infant Baptisme, and upon that Hinge the rest hang. You know we plead Scripture Authority for infant Baptisme, and therefore I will pass by this Chapter as a confused heap of hay and stubble.

CHAP. X.

THIS Chapter is a gathering together of many Texts of holy Scripture, which I read with reverence, and find nothing in them against baptizing believers and their infants.

CHAP. XI.

THIS last is a Chapter of Considerations and Conclusions, which I shall answer unto with my Considerations: wherein I am occasioned to say the same thing many times over, because I make Answer to every Proposal.

1. Infant Baptism is one of the Ordinances of the Gospel Churches. Lord make the Opposers of it ashamed, that they may see it to be thine Ordinance.

2. Lord give us all renewed hearts, that we may walk in thy Statutes and wayes to doe them.

3. They reject the Counsel of God that reject the Infants of believers from Baptisme.

4. To exclude infants of believers from the Seal of the Covenant, is to change Gods Ordinance: God hath commanded that believers and their infants should be baptized.

5. God hath commanded to baptize believers and their infants: we therefore offer to God that which he hath commanded, and hath alwayes accepted ever since the institution thereof unto this day.

6. There was no error in their Baptisme, *Acts 19. 1.* ~~Or~~ were they rebaptized, they were so far instructed

ed by the Apostle as to see that they were rightly baptized. There have been many errors and stains in baptism, by the corruption of Antichrist: but we are not therefore to be rebaptized: an error in the infant-subject, and in the manner of the action, as you suppose in our infant-baptism, is not essential, and therefore neither destroy baptism, nor require a rebaptizing, were the case as you say.

7. My infant baptism is true baptism according to divine institution. I live in the obedience of that gospel ordinance, my parents believing, covenanting, promising on my behalf are accepted with God, I am brought up by Gods grace, and taught to make them mine by my own voluntary taking hold on the Covenant; and praised be God for this gospel way of propagation of Religion, and continuation of the Churches.

8. Baptism was delivered to believers and their infants as Circumcision was.

9. I know not who those believers be that deny baptism to their infants, unless some of the Anabaptists approve themselves to be found believers.

10. What Truth hath not been opposed and disputed? Truth cometh forth, not the worse, but the brighter; & I believe so will the issue be of the doctrine of baptizing of infants. Letters passing between Mr. Fesse and me, I proposed that Question to him, Whether when the Jews are converted will they baptize their infants? He answered, He believed they would, and gave me two Texts of Scripture for it, one was Jer. 30. 20. the other I have forgotten, I think it was in *Isai*.

11. There is a famous Example of baptizing believers and their infants, *ut supra*, *Acts* 2. 41.

12. If the salvation of my Soul lay upon it, I dare with holy boldness of Faith affirm, that believers and their infants were baptized in the Primitive Church.

13. This I pass by as inconsiderable.

14. Bap-

Baptisme of believers and their infants is a written Ordinance by divine institution.

15. Christ hath in faithfulness to the Church left us many Scripture Testimonies for infant Baptisme.

16. Christ hath left written in the holy pattern of Gospel institutions, that believers and their infants are to be baptized.

17. The baptizing of believers dependeth not only upon sound Consequence, but also upon the plain written Word. Baptizing by dipping dependeth only upon probable Consequence, and therefore cannot nullify such Baptisme as is done by sprinkling.

18. Though the infants in *Lidias* house be not named, yet the whole household is mentioned, and who shall teach the Holy Ghost to speak.

19. Christ our Law-giver hath given us an expresse institution for baptizing believers and their infants.

20. Baptizing believers and their infants is brought into the Church by expresse institution and command.

21. It is safe to admit baptizing believers and their infants being expressly commanded; and when the parents are taught, the infants also are taught.

22. We can say with a cleer Faith, Lord thou hast required us that we should baptize believers and their infants, you cannot so answer for excluding infants from the Covenant, and from the Seal thereof.

23. Baptizing believers and their Seed is a Gospel Ordinance in expresse words and command.

24. We are baptized according to the expresse command of God, to reject infants from it, is to reject the Counsel of God.

25. We ought to believe that our infants may be regenerated from the womb, if not, yet they are in the way to be regenerated, and are brought under the gale of the Spirit to accomplish it, and this is accepted.

26. We are not ashamed of baptizing believers & their infants

they that exclude such infants have cause to be ashamed
 Lord make them ashamed.

27. We baptize believers and their infants by an express word of command.

28. Baptizing believers and their infants is a pure Ordinance of God by an express Rule.

29. In baptizing believers and their infants, we do what God hath commanded, and we shall have the comfort of *well done my good Servant*, but they that exclude such infants, shall in that point lose the comfort of, *well done my good Servant*, Christ was much displeased with them, for hindring infants to be brought unto him.

When *I* say the same thing over and over, do not nauseate at me, but consider that *I* am led unto it, by the paper that *I* answer, which proposeth all the matter which *I* answer unto, *I* confess it is a very confused heap.

Lord lead us into thy Truth, and help us to Truth it in love.
 Eph. 4. 15.

F I N I S
